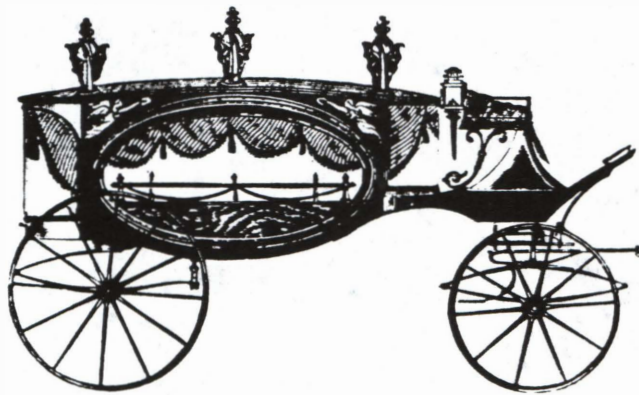

Edited by John Harney and John Rimmer

June/July 1970



The death and life of British ufology

EDITORIAL

Transcendental Ufology?

Many ufologists have, during the past twenty years or so, expressed the opinion that the UFO may be an essentially psychic phenomenon. Such opinions, though, have generally been couched in language so oblique or obscure and so heavily larded with chunks of pseudo-scientific nonsense that many prominent ufologists, earnestly seeking a conventional scientific explanation, have felt it safe to ignore them.

During the past few years, however, ufologists have become familiar with the writings of John Keel, who has forcefully expressed such views in plain English. There has been an increasing tendency for other researchers to give at least qualified support to his views. Supporters of the ETH have reacted strongly, fearing that, if the present trend is allowed to continue unchecked, ufology will eventually become a branch of occultism.

Recently John Keel has published two books, which are reviewed briefly in this issue. We have now obtained copies of these books and hope to publish more lengthy reviews in our next issue. We feel that many ufologists must now pause to consider their approach to the subject. Is it possible to reach any rational conclusion concerning the real nature of the UFO phenomenon by using the methods of the physical scientist and the psychologist? Or is the UFO essentially a problem for the psychical researcher? What of the methods and findings of John Keel and other, like-minded investigators? Are they valid or invalid?

We intend to devote the next issue of this Bulletin to discussion of these questions and we would like to publish the considered opinions of our readers. So, if you have any views on these matters, please send them to the Editor as soon as possible, to be considered for publication in our next issue.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

From Dr J. CLEARY-BAKER, Editor of DUFORA Journal

Dear Mr Harney,

In reply to Peter Rogerson's observations, I would state that I have been an investigator of Psychic, Fortean and UFO phenomena for more than thirty years. My studies have never induced in me any feelings of trepidation. I have never sought to deny the reality of manifestations except when I found them false and I have certainly never sought to frame a religion on the basis of my findings.

I have never 'rationalised' events, at Warminster or elsewhere, into any fantasy of 'space brothers' - in fact I have frequently criticised the whole 'space brother' concept - and I agree with your correspondent that some of the Warminster happenings, though not all, have been baffling and doubtless frightening to some persons.

If I cling to a modified version of the ETH it is not out of deference to any 'old-time ufological establishment.' It is because I have yet to find any alternative explanation of UFO phenomena which fits the facts as well. I do read the FSR and I was one of the first English UFO researchers to hail the investigations of John Keel.

During my years as Editor of 'DUFORA JOURNAL' I have sought to confine my criticisms to principles and to avoid attacks on

persons, believing as I do that the sort of vicious in-fighting which is carried on in the United States is unconstructive and harmful to our studies. This seems to have led some of my critics to the equation: won't fight equals can't defend himself. This is a mistake and sooner or later the said critics are liable to find this out.

Yours truly, J.Cleary-Baker, Ph.D., 3 Devenish Road,
Weeke, Winchester.

TWO INDEXING PROJECTS

by John A. Rimmer

One of the greatest needs of modern ufology is an information retrieval system that will allow serious researchers to trace published source material on the UFO problem. An article published in this Bulletin in 1968 (+) suggested ways in which such a system could be organised. We are pleased to note that, taking inspiration from that article, Conrad Hunter, of Charleston, South Carolina, is endeavouring to compile a UFO Researchers' Reference. He is attempting at first to index a short-list of books, and codify sighting reports in them. People who would like to help in this very worthwhile project are urged to contact Mr Hunter at 1434 W. Fairfield Ave., S.C. 29407, U.S.A.

Before hearing of Mr Hunter's project the Associate Editor of this Bulletin had been considering the compilation of a quarterly or half-yearly 'Index of British UFO Literature'. This would cover British UFO periodicals published since January 1, 1970. Articles only would be indexed, not sighting reports, as these appear to be well covered by other sources.

It is hoped that the index will be published as a supplement to MUF0B at regular intervals. All editors of British UFO journals who would be interested in helping in the compilation of such an index are invited to contact John A. Rimmer, 6 Norgate Street, Liverpool, L4 0RH.

Reference

RIMMER, JOHN A. Access to Information: Recording and Retrieval,
MUF0B, 1,6, p 55.

BOOK REVIEWS

Strange Creatures from Time and Space by John A. Keel, Fawcett Publications, 75c.

UFOs: Operation Trojan Horse by John A. Keel, G.P.Rutnam's Sons, £6.95.

It has been some time since we were first told that a book by John A. Keel would soon appear - nearly two years ago, I believe. But neither the battles in the editorial offices nor Tony Kimery's MIB phonecalls have prevented these two books from finally appearing this year.

Strange Creatures from Time and Space begins with a sweeping generality which we later come to accept, if we had not already believed it in the first place: "No matter where you live on this planet, someone within two hundred miles of your home has had a direct confrontation with a frightening apparition or inexplicable 'monster' within the last generation." This comprehensively indexed book is crammed full with hundreds of reports ranging from scorpions, to phantom cats, sea serpents, hairy humanoids, A.S.S.es (Abominable Swamp Slob) and UFO occupants. Keel's writing style is

rarely dry and occasionally humorous. A loose raison commune for the compilation of all these creatures reveals itself by such phrases as "A very important clue to the whole monster/UFO/ghost phenomena..." This theory is greatly expanded and is the chief concern of UFOs: Operation Trojan Horse. Creatures... presents a part of the casebook material which was originally intended for UFOs: OTH.

However a warning should have appeared in the beginning of UFOs: Operation Trojan Horse requesting that persons not thoroughly acquainted with UFOs should stay away from it. Only after you have literally become bored with UFO sighting reports and accepted the existence of the UFO should you attempt to read the book. As all aspects of ufology are intermeshed with knowledge from other fields (UFO colours with physics, contactee reports with religious visions, etc.), one begins to realize the complexities and scope of the UFO phenomena. "All the various ologies represent the famous blind men trooping to Cathay who encountered an elephant. Each ology has been examining a different part of the elephant and giving it a different interpretation. It is time now for us to gain the total vision necessary for viewing the elephant as it is, not as we would like it to be." When one sees the "total vision" of the existence of UFOs, the theory develops that UFOs are ultraterrestrial, existing in our own environment but on a different space-time continuum. It can be said that Mr Keel's ingenious "Trojan Horse" idea, where one can no longer distinguish between what is false and what is truly false, and presentation will "blow your mind." Although it is only another theory, this one, at times thread-like thin, is nevertheless quite strong and convincingly reliable. The importance of this book cannot be stressed enough. Stop what you are doing. Read it and give Mr Keel's fascinating theory the attention it rightly deserves.

--- Patrick A. Huyghe

THE DEATH AND LIFE OF BRITISH UFOLOGY - a vicious personal attack

(With apologies to Jane Jacobs)

by John A. Rimmer

Ufology in Britain is dead. The UFO phenomenon is not dead - yet. It manages to struggle on against a torrent of public apathy. The shadow of Condon lies long over the land. But the people it seems to envelop deepest are the ufologists.

British ufology is in-groupy, gossipy and sterile. With the exception of FSR, (a beacon in a dark and hopeless sea) and about two ther journals, the magazines offer stale re-hashes, endless reprints and trivia. Many are becoming simply receptacles for snippets of space-news from the national dailies, or the Novosti News Agency. Some of those that are worth reading are only so because of the hilarious lunacy of their editors. Reading the average British ufomag produces an alarming sense of deja-vu. The same articles, and names, crop up constantly. Mr Albert Figgis besides being editor of 'Trivia--voice of the 21st century' is secretary of BUFLOP, president of DRIVEL (+) and Director-General of SMERSH. An article printed in journal A is reprinted, usually without acknowledgement, in paraphrase, in journal B. If acknowledgement is given it is usually in the form of sycophantic back-slapping from one member of an in-group to another.

The in-groups, how they flourish. There's the Warminster in-group. A classic, this. Any attempt to take any kind of disinterested look at the vastly over-rated Warminster affair is greeted with a broadside from the big guns: vicious personal attack, boom, I am fed up with snide comments, crash, this small minded carping, ker-pow. Enemy critic sunk without trace, sir. Why

does this in-group not realise that no Golden Tablets have been handed to anyone at Warminster and that there is room for other interpretations besides theirs? They may be right, God help us, but until such time as they are proved right, will they not allow any criticism of their briar-patch?

Then of course there's the Scorrison/Scorrison/Scorr-itttonnn in-group. Not aggressive these, just tedious. A few years ago they had their moment of glory, and they are loth to let it pass. An understandable human reaction, but why should it be inflicted on the rest of us?

Then there's the BUFORA in-group. Very interesting this one. It should be required study for organisational psychologists. The plots and counterplots are Machiavellian. I find them fascinating, but I am the sort of sadist who finds self-destruction fascinating. To the average ufologist, however, the great BUFORA saga is rapidly rivalling Jackie Onassis or John Lennon as one of Time magazine's Bores of the Year. Yet the BUFORA people are all honourable men, why do they behave in this way? Chiefly, I think, because they have run out of ideas. Because they are sterile, devoid of any new ideas, incapable of adjusting a way of thinking. This leads to pomposity, a deep, self-assured feeling that any criticism is the work of an inferior intellect. This leads to pompous letters that are usually good for a laugh.

As Newton Minnow once remarked about something else, the British UFO scene is 'a vast wasteland'. The little local groups are sad, lost in the wilderness, held together by camaraderie, a feeling of obligation and little else. Their meetings consist of an elite lecturing each other in turns, repeating the same tired bromides and listless cliches. There is no life in these groups, witness their constant, pathetic appeals for funds. Surely anybody genuinely interested in ufology as a hobby or a serious study would not be loth to pay out money in pursuit of their interest. The average British 'ufologist' has no compunction against spending a small fortune on gardening, budgerigars, motor cars or wrought iron hall tables, but ask him to spend three and six on train fare to a meeting, or give a sub. of a pound or two to keep a magazine going, and watch him howl. MUFORG was one of the few honest UFO groups. When it was dead it had the decency to lie down and not inflict a spectacle of suffering on us.

Face it! The average ufologist wants to go to a group and hear someone telling him about the space people. If he's over twenty-five he wants to hear about the nice space people. If he's under twenty-five he wants to hear about the nasty space people. The last thing he wants to do is study and investigate, or pay out any of his easy earned money so that others can. Even the investigation is limited. If you accept, as most do, that the UFOs are space craft there is little you can do except panic and wait for them to announce themselves. And most people are doing this very well indeed.

As Peter Rogerson pointed out in the last MUF0B, the much derided 'Armchair Ufologist' is in reality a vital part of any progress we may be making. It is the Armchair Ufologist who sifts through reports and books, on UFOs, ghosts, occultism, sociology et al and offers balanced speculation. It is the serious researcher like John Keel who uncovers new and controversial data, who complements the work of the A.U. It is the average British Ufologist (who has probably never heard of John Keel or read FSR) who is too busy running up and down hills flashing lights to be able to do any constructive thinking.

As Lenin once remarked about something else: "What is to be done?" The answer of course is that there's precious little that can

be done. It is impossible, not to mention unconstitutional, to go around and forcibly shut up the various bore-ins. (If one did this of course there would be the danger of closing off the rich vein of unconscious humour that the more crackpot elements occasionally reveal. As a lover of lunacy in all its forms this, to me, is a very real danger.) The only course that seems in any way feasible is to cultivate an attitude of elegant detachment and turn one's interest as much to the phenomenon of ufologists as to the phenomenon of UFOs.

This, whilst cathartic to the ego, does little to aid and revivify the ailing body of British Ufology. I can only offer a counsel of despair. Any serious ufologist must eschew the groups, national or local, and work through correspondents, journals and temporary ad-hoc working groups. The local societies are just rag-bags of assorted characters with no guarantee that any of them are capable of any constructive thought. The so-called national societies are basically local societies for anyone living within reach of a London Underground station. British ufology needs at least one other journal of the quality and stature of FSR, not as competition but to provide an additional outlet for original research. It needs at least one person as controversial as John Keel, both for the original ideas he would produce and the reaction he would hopefully spark off amongst other ufologists.

It is unlikely that either of these two events shall come to pass. What is more likely to happen is that the same old faces ('Yesterday's Men', to coin a phrase!) will drag on until, hopefully, a new generation of whiz-kid ufologists turns up to save us from this sad, sorry but often painfully hilarious plight. Hopefully.

(+) DRIVEL-- Direct Research of Interplanetary Vehicles and Extraterrestrial Landings, c/o 17 Widgeon's Covert, Neasden, London NW 10.

LOCAL UFO REPORT

Between Neston and Chester

June 10, 1970 1525 BST

While travelling between Neston and Chester a man saw a silvery object like an airship descending quickly. No further details available.

NOTES QUOTES & QUERIES

Exploding piano mystery

The following intriguing report appeared in the Daily Mail on May 25, 1970:-

Lulu's hit Boom Bang-a-Bang is still a smash even though it has slipped from the charts. For as widow Mrs Rosa Tegerdine played it at her home her piano exploded. The blast blew out the mahogany front panel and the inside was warped and splintered. When the dust settled a terrified Mrs Tegerdine found her old-fashioned upright piano ruined. Mrs Tegerdine, 67, said at her home at Church Green, Lowestoft, yesterday:-

"I like modern pop songs and was playing a few chords of my favourite, Boom Bang-a-Bang, when there was a big bang and the piano fell apart. The explosion seemed to come from right inside the piano. I was frightened to death and ran out of the room."

Later, police said the blast was one of a series of mystery bangs in Lowestoft. A spokesman said: "There have been a number in the area recently."

If any reader has any information on the other 'bangs' in the Lowestoft area, we would be very pleased to hear from him.

Italian 'monster' report

John Keel's name seems to have cropped up a number of times in this issue, but here is a report which would not be out of place in his book, Strange Creatures from Time and Space. According to the Sunday Express (July 26):-

Troops and police are hunting a multi-legged monster which is reported to be roaming woods near Forlì in central Italy. The monster--some call it a dinosaur--was first seen last Tuesday by Antonio Samorani, a 48-year-old peasant. He reported that he had been chased by a "huge scaly thing at least 15 ft long." He added: "It walked on a lot of thick legs and its breath was searing hot. I ran for my life and it followed me for a couple of hundred yards."

Police were sceptical at first but changed their minds when they saw large footprints in a glade near where Samorani says he saw the monster. Police chief Dr Pedoni said: "We are convinced some sort of creature of colossal size is hiding in the woods. Three other people have seen it. We are combing the area with armed police and soldiers with nets. If possible we want to catch it alive. Over a thousand guns will be out looking for this animal when the hunting season opens on August 1. If the local hunters reach it first we will be powerless to stop them."

But we know--John Keel knows--("David Vincent knows...") that they won't catch it.

Notice for local readers

We require one or two local enthusiasts to assist us with the production of this Bulletin. We hold our editorial meetings in a Liverpool pub, so applicants (male or female) must be over 18, and neither teetotal nor alcoholic. More importantly, they must also be reasonably intelligent, open-minded and literate. Anyone interested please write (don't phone) to the Editor, giving relevant details.

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